

The Criminal Narrative Experience of Psychopathic and Personality Disordered Offenders

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Introduction

Although once ignored and regarded as untreatable, Personality Disorder (PD) and Psychopathy has been given more attention since the implementation of initiatives such as the Offender Personality Disorder (OPD) pathway (formerly Dangerous and Severe Personality Disorder programme, DSPD). Such initiatives were introduced because of the disproportionate amount of serious crime committed by this population (Kiehl & Hoffman, 2011). The OPD pathway draws on psychologically informed services to manage complex and challenging offenders who have severe PD and pose a high risk of harm to others, or of reoffending (NOMS, 2011).

PD is defined by unusual and persistent traits affecting a person's ability to cope with life (Jarrett, 2006). Despite concerns regarding the classification system (e.g. Jarrett, 2006), the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM) identified ten PDs arranged into three clusters. Cluster A PDs are considered odd and eccentric and consist of Paranoid, Schizoid, and Schizotypal. Cluster B are considered dramatic and erratic and consist of Antisocial, Borderline, Histrionic, and Narcissistic. Cluster C are considered anxious and fearful and consist of Avoidant, Dependent, and Obsessive Compulsive (see DSM-5 manual, American Psychiatric Association, 2013). This system is useful because it provides a basis for diagnosis and treatment. Although not categorised a PD, psychopathy is considered a severe form of antisocial PD. It is defined as a chronic mental disorder with abnormal or violent social behaviour. It emphasises affective and interpersonal traits such as superficial charm, pathological lying, egocentricity, lack of remorse, and callousness (Coleman, 2008).

Although not limited to offenders, research indicates the prevalence of PD and psychopathy is heightened within a criminal context (NOMS, 2011). An estimated 4-11% of the UK population have a PD (Coid, Yang, Tyrer, Roberst & Ullrich, 2006) and 60-70% of these are in prison (NOMS, 2011). Hare (2003) estimated 1% of the general population were

psychopaths and Coid et al. (2009) found 7.7% of male prisoners in England and Wales were diagnosed with psychopathy. Furthermore, Kiehl and Hoffman (2011) argued those with psychopathy were 20 to 25 times more likely to be in custody. It is important initiatives have been developed to address the challenges associated with this population (e.g. the OPD Pathway). These challenges include recidivism (Hemphill et al., 2011), control problems in custody (Coid, 2002), and resistance to treatment (Kiehl & Hoffman, 2011). Further insight is needed into this population given the link between PD and offending is well established, but a full understanding of the relationship between them is lacking (Davison & Janca, 2012).

Narrative Theory

One way of developing insight into this population is by looking at offending from a first-person perspective which can highlight the underlying psychological processes driving behaviour (Yang & Mulvey, 2012). Narrative theory asserts that individuals make sense of the world and their place in it by constructing stories with themselves as the main character (Habermas & Bluck, 2000). This becomes their narrative (personal story) which incorporates sequences of events, mental states, experiences and occurrences (Bruner, 1990). The stories people convey about incidents and experiences in their life as well as their lives in general forms the basis of narrative data. These stories portray the significance the individual places on their experiences and provides an understanding of how meaningful it was to them (Singer, 2004). Stories are readily used as a tool to explain things and are a rich dataset to explore how people understand their own lives (Polkinghorne, 1996).

McAdams (1993, 2001) proposed personal narratives drive behaviour and life stories are governed by an underlying structure of motivation characterised by ‘agency’ and ‘communion’. Individuals try to assert their power and control (agency) and to connect to others and develop relationships encompassing love and intimacy (communion). This motivational structure is echoed by Abele and Wojciszke (2007) and the distinction defines

narrative roles. However, it is argued there are a limited number of narrative roles within each culture as there are limits to the conceptualisation of life stories (Canter & Youngs, 2009).

Research into narratives highlighted the value in subjective accounts to understand core beliefs, roles adopted, and choice of which details to highlight rather than focusing on objective truth (Zechmeister & Romero, 2002). The strengths of this approach include gaining a deeper understanding of the internal world and identifying targets for change which is reflected in studies of this approach in a criminal context. This became known as criminal narratives.

Criminal Narratives

Criminal narratives are the way an individual sees themselves during the commissioning of crime and how they make sense of that. The narrative approach embraces the assumption that the environment and situation is influenced by individual perspectives of what happens in their life (Presser, 2012). Therefore, knowing an offender's background and understanding their interpretation of the crime is fundamental (Ferrell, 1999).

Presser (2009) did however, raise the point of authenticity in offender accounts. Given offenders are routinely asked to explain their actions; they face having to balance what they did with the way they present now (McKendy, 2006). This is pertinent given they are rewarded with incentives such as parole for presenting in certain ways. It is therefore suspected narratives provided are strategic (Goffman, 1971). Presser (2009), however, highlighted that narratives are not concerned with truth in terms of what happened but rather the way an offender viewed themselves and is primarily about recalling experience. It is therefore argued criminal narrative data is much like other data sources (e.g. crime reports and victim statements) in that there will always be limitations regarding authenticity (Presser,

2009) but there is value in exploring it. This value relates to developing an understanding of personal perspectives to inform insight into criminal behaviour.

Canter (1994) considered offenders a unique group within the general population and Youngs and Canter (2011) proposed the Criminal Narrative Framework (CNF). The CNF consists of four roles that offenders adopt whilst committing crime: the 'Victim', 'Professional', 'Hero', and 'Revenger'. The framework aimed to help understand crime and why individuals engaged in, and abstained from, offending. Canter and Youngs (2009) and then Ioannou, Synnott, Reynolds & Pearson (2018) described an offender living out a Victim role as feeling powerless and helpless. They live in a world where nothing matters, and nothing makes sense. A Professional wants control over their environment and offending is satisfying. A Hero does not feel guilt or anxiety over offending; they experience positive emotion as offending is part of a mission for a happy ending. In a Revenger role, there was no choice but to seek revenge due to being mistreated and deprived.

Identifying distinct narrative roles emphasises the benefits of applying narrative theory in a criminal context and surpasses traditional approaches exploring retrospective reports of involvement in crime. Narrative approaches are explorative in nature and are useful for explaining the motivation behind crime as well as identifying patterns in behaviour and distinct themes that distinguish offenders. Presser (2009) argued the behaviour represents acting out the narrative and the pursuit of the narrative is the motivation. Presser (2009) also highlighted, however, that an individual's life story is evolving, and narratives change too rapidly to be accurately measured. Despite this suggestion, several studies have applied narrative theory and specifically the CNF to a criminal context. This provides strong evidence that the exploration of criminal narratives is beneficial and can provide much insight into offending behaviour.

Ioannou, Canter, Youngs and Synnott (2015) for example found that crime type and narrative roles appeared linked. Property offences, drug offences and robbery were associated with the Hero and Professional roles. Violence, sexual offences and murder were linked with the Revenger and Victim roles. Although this study only incorporated six broad types of crime, it highlighted practical implications in terms of the treatment of offenders (i.e. shaping interview techniques and identifying treatment programmes based on narrative role and crime type, Youngs & Canter, 2009). This study highlights the significance of narrative research and its usefulness in exploring criminal behaviour (Ioannou et al., 2015). It set a precedent for understanding what drives criminal behaviour across numerous crimes using this method.

The identification of the CNF and research demonstrating how it can be applied to an offending population provides insight into the way an offender views themselves during the commissioning of crimes and the motivation behind offending. Distinguishing between offenders in this way contributes to our understanding of how to work with them throughout the treatment process. This is unlike other approaches which ask offenders to interpret their offending, and identify their motivation, which is impeded by their level of insight into themselves and their behaviour.

Criminal Narratives and Emotions

A critique of criminal narratives is they ignore emotional experiences (Ioannou, Canter & Youngs, 2016). Katz (1988) highlighted the importance of emotional states in offending and Canter and Youngs (2012) argued they were also key in understanding distinct criminal narratives. Research exploring the structure of emotions outside of offending found two distinct dimensions: degree of arousal and pleasantness-unpleasantness (Russell, 1980). Furthermore, Russell (2003) proposed emotions were circular and could be seen on two axes; arousal and non-arousal, and pleasure and displeasure. He also accepted emotional states amalgamate to produce four categories of mood: elation, distress, depression and calm. This

framework received much support (Feldman, 1995) and Canter and Ioannou (2004a) applied it to offending. Results showed emotions mirrored Russell's circumplex and these emotions could be examined in a similar way to narrative roles.

Ioannou et al. (2016) proposed the Criminal Narrative Experience (CNE) framework which linked criminal narratives and emotions. It incorporated the 'Elated Hero', 'Calm Professional', 'Distressed Revenger', and 'Depressed Victim'. The elated hero views offending as an adventure and they have a euphoric appreciation of its significant. The aim is to overcome obstacles to achieve goals. The calm professional is merely performing a task, they are experts, and refer to it as a job. They justify offending and ignore consequences as it is routine. The distressed revenger feels wronged and must gain revenge to avoid humiliation. The depressed victim feels defeated and that fate is against them. They feel negatively for this but feel their misfortune or even punishment is undeserved. Offending is viewed as out of control and against their will. Ioannou, Synnott, Lowe and Tzani-Pepelasi (2018) applied this framework to young offenders. Results identified three themes: the calm professional, elated hero, and a combination of the distressed revenger and depressed victim. They were also able to link individual themes to static and dynamic risk factors.

The CNE framework provides a unique perspective on offending behaviour as data was generated from offenders themselves (Ioannou et al., 2016). It also addresses a key limitation of criminal narratives by incorporating emotions. Given this framework is newly developed, it has not been tested with a diverse population. Further exploration is required to explore its reliability and validity. As highlighted by Ioannou et al. (2016), the study offers an understanding of how the CNE contributes to the development and maintenance of offending but there are some factors that need further exploration (e.g. different types of offences, backgrounds and personality characteristics).

The Present Study

There is limited research into the effect of PD and Psychopathy on the criminal narrative experience. Exploring this provides an opportunity to examine underlying triggers; specifically, underlying beliefs, motives and schemas (as suggested by Jarrett, 2006) and may provide insight into the offending behaviour of this population. A clear understanding is important for both treatment and risk management (Davison & Janca, 2012). Additionally, evidence of whether the framework can be applied would inform its validity. The aim of the present study is to examine whether the CNE can be applied to offenders with PD and psychopathy. The objectives are to: 1) Explore the CNE of PD and psychopathic offenders. 2) Explore whether specific PDs relate to specific CNE themes. 3) Explore whether there is a relationship between psychopathy and any of the CNE themes.

Methodology

Participants

Participants consisted of 22 male offenders recruited from the Severe Personality Disorder (SPD) unit of a high-security prison. They had been convicted of sexual and violent offences and received determinate (n=1), indeterminate (n=8) or life sentences (n=13). The age range was 28 to 59 (M=40.86; SD=9.37). Eighteen participants were diagnosed with psychopathy. The mean PCL-r score ranged from 16.8 to 38 (M=27.74; SD=5.88). Table 1 shows the number of participants diagnosed with a definite diagnosis of each PD.

[INSERT TABLE 1]

Data

Psychopathy scores and PD diagnoses were provided by the SPD unit obtained using the PCL-r and IPDE assessments respectively. A cut-off score of 25 is used in the British Criminal Justice System to assess an individual as psychopathic (Hare, Clark, Grann, & Thornton, 2000).

Materials

Offence Account. This was designed to gain an offence account which would inform responses on subsequent questionnaires. It was also used to gain demographic information about the population including age and sentence length.

Narrative Roles Questionnaire. This was developed by Canter et al. (2003; 2009) and consisted of 36 statements designed to assess how individuals viewed themselves in the commissioning of crime. This was categorised into the four themes outlined in the CNF (Youngs & Canter, 2011). Statements include “I was in control” and “It was my only choice”.

Emotions Questionnaire. This consisted of 26 statements thought to characterise the emotions experienced when carrying out crime. This was used as it incorporated Russell’s (1997) Circumplex of Emotions and the questionnaire was developed from pilot research by Canter and Ioannou (2004a). Statements include “I felt angry” and “I felt excited”.

Items on the narrative roles and emotions questionnaires were scored on a 5-point Likert scale where participants could rate their answers with how much it applied to them (1 = not at all to 5 = very much). This scale allows more detail than a yes or no rating scale.

Procedure

A two-stage recruitment process was implemented. Firstly, the researcher attended community meetings on the SPD unit to promote the study and distribute participant information sheets. These information sheets had an option to express interest in participating in the research. Secondly, the researcher attended association on numerous occasions where written consent was gained and questionnaires were administered. The Narrative Roles Questionnaire and Emotions Questionnaire were counterbalanced to avoid order effects. Finally, participants were given a debrief sheet and given the opportunity to ask any questions. An anonymised dataset of PCL-r scores and PD diagnoses were provided for those who consented to the research. All data was entered into SPSS and transferred to Hudap (a

specialised software package) for the analysis to be carried out. For a review of the process of conducting research in prisons see Synnott & Coyne (2016).

Analysis

The data was analysed using Smallest Space Analysis (SSA; see Guttman, 1968). This is a non-metric multidimensional scaling technique that explores the relationship between each variable and every other variable. This analysis was most appropriate to explore the relationship of criminal narrative experiences within PD and psychopathic offenders with the aim of developing a model. SSA calculates association coefficients between all variables from the data matrix (the rank order of correlations) and are represented in a geometric space using points. Variables highly correlated appear closer together in the space. Therefore, any variables occurring frequently together in PD and psychopathic offenders would be represented in similar areas of the plot. The patterns these points make are regions which can be explored thematically where facets can be extracted. The coefficient of alienation is used to gauge how well the spatial representations fit with correlations represented in the data matrix. Rank orders, or association coefficients, attributed to correlations are compared with the rank order of the distance between points in the SSA space. The closer the rank orders, the better the fit. This process is repeated to find the best fit for the data. The analysis allows visual exploration of whether individual items are correlated. If they are; then these items would be represented in similar regions and would provide evidence for distinct criminal narrative experiences in PD and psychopathic offenders. A number of studies from have found such MDS models to be productive in recent years (Ioannou, Canter, Youngs & Synnott 2015; Ioannou, Hammond & Simpson, 2015; Youngs, Ioannou & Eagles, 2016; Ioannou, Canter & Youngs, 2017; Ioannou, Synnott, Lowe & Tzani-Pepelasi, 2018; Yaneva, Ioannou, Hammond & Synnott, 2018, Synnott, Ioannou, Coyne & Hemingway, 2018).

Once a model was established, t-tests were used to explore whether PD influenced the CNE theme the offender identified with. Each PD (present or not present) represented an IV where the DV was CNE theme which had four levels (Calm Professional, Elated Hero, Distressed Revenger, Depressed Victim). Nine t-tests were completed to reflect each of the PDs. Histrionic PD was excluded due to there being no participants presenting with a diagnosis. Pearson's Product Moment correlation was used to explore the relationship between psychopathy and the CNE themes.

Results

SSA was conducted on the 26 items on the emotions questionnaire and 36 items on the criminal narrative roles questionnaire together. Figure 1 shows the distribution of all 62 items across 22 cases. This was completed to identify the CNE of PD and psychopathic offenders. The resulting two-dimensional SSA has a Guttman-Lingoes coefficient of alienation of 0.2119. This indicates an adequate fit between the Pearson's coefficients of the narrative roles and emotions variables and their location represented in the geometric space.

[INSERT FIGURE 1]

Themes of Emotions and Narrative Roles

To test the hypothesis that emotions and narrative roles would present in distinct regions, the SSA plot was examined. Emotions and narrative roles appear to form four themes previously identified by Ioannou et al. (2016) in the CNE framework: Elated Hero, Calm Professional, Distressed Revenger, and Depressed Victim.

Elated Hero. The 32 elements forming the Elated Hero are (1) exhilarated, (2) confident, (3) pleased, (4) enthusiastic, (5) thoughtful, (6) excited, (7) delighted, (8) contented, (9) manly, (10) I was like a professional, (11) I had to do it, (12) it was fun, (13) it was right, (14) it was interesting, (15) it was like an adventure, (16) it was routine, (17) I was doing a job, (18) I knew what I was doing, (19) It was the only thing to do, (20) it was a

mission, (21) nothing else mattered, (22) I had power, (23) it was my only choice, (24) I didn't care what would happen, (25) what was happening was just fate, (26) it all went to plan, (27) it was a manly thing to do, (28) it was just a usual days work, (29) it was like being on an adventure, (30) it was the only thing I could think of doing, (31) I knew I was taking a risk, (32) I knew it was going to happen.

This region comprises the Elated theme of emotions and Hero theme of narrative roles. This type of offender can be described as experiencing a range of emotions from exhilarated and excited to contented, manly, thoughtful and enthusiastic. As well as feeling that offending was fun, interesting and like an adventure, it was also just routine, like doing a job. Offending was also like a mission which gave them power and nothing else mattered.

Calm Professional. The 6 elements forming the Calm Professional are (1) calm, (2) safe, (3) relaxed, (4) it was routine, (5) I was in control, (6) there was nothing special about what happened. This region incorporates the Calm theme of emotions and Professional theme of narrative roles. The Calm Professional feels safe, calm and relaxed because they are in control, there is nothing special about their offending and they see it as routine.

Distressed Revenger. The 8 elements forming the Distressed Revenger are (1) annoyed, (2) angry, (3) irritated, (4) unhappy, (5) I was acting out of revenge, (6) I couldn't stop myself, (7) I was trying revenge, (8) I was getting my own back. This region incorporates the Distressed theme of emotions and Revenger theme of narrative roles. As such, an offender relating to this theme feels a continuum of emotions from anger and annoyed to irritated. They are unhappy and are unable to stop themselves acting out or trying to get revenge.

Depressed Victim. The 16 elements forming the Depressed Victim are (1) lonely, (2) scared, (3) upset, (4) worried, (5) depressed, (6) sad, (7) confused, (8) miserable, (9) courageous, (10) pointless, (11) I was helpless, (12) I was a victim, (13) I was confused about

what was happening, (14) I was looking for recognition, (15) I just wanted to get it over with, (16) it was like I wasn't part of it.

This region includes the Depressed theme of emotions and Victim theme of narrative roles. An offender who relates to this role can be described as feeling negative emotions such as upset, sad, depressed and pointless but also feel lonely, worried and confused. However, they can also feel courageous for acting. They see themselves as a helpless victim who was confused about what was happening but are also seeking recognition, they just want to get it over with and can feel like they were not part of it.

Scales of CNE Themes

Given that four CNE themes were identified to represent distinct themes of any given crime, the emotions and narrative roles attributed to each should form a scale representing some underlying dimension. Cronbach's alpha was used to test the reliability of each scale as a representation of each theme. These are presented in table 2. This indicated a high degree of association between the variables in each of the four themes.

[INSERT TABLE 2]

Testing the Framework

Each case was analysed separately to explore the regional thematic split of the SSA and to determine whether cases could be assigned to a specific theme. It should be noted the SSA reveals four thematic themes irrespective of the offence committed. Although an offender may relate to more than one theme, it would be expected that most cases would be classified under one specific theme. Therefore, it is important to explore whether individual cases can be classified as one of the four themes to validate the framework of narrative roles.

Given the number of elements included in each theme differed, each individual case was given a percentage score to represent the extent it related to each theme. Consistent with criteria set by Ioannou et al. (2016) the theme with the highest percentage attributed to it was

classified as the dominant theme. For example, in case number 11, Depressed Victim scored 43.8%, Distressed Revenger scored 77.5%, Elated Hero scored 33.8% and Calm Professional scored 23.3%. Therefore, the dominant theme was the Distressed Revenger.

If a case related to more than one theme it was classed as a hybrid. For this to be the case, there had to be a similar percentage attributed to each theme. All cases could be classified as either pure type or hybrid themes; 90.9% ($n = 20$) could be classified as pure type and 9.1% as hybrid. The most frequent pure type was Distressed Revenger representing 59% of cases. See table 3 for the number of cases assigned to each theme.

[INSERT TABLE 3]

Personality Disorder (PD)

To explore whether a diagnosis of PD influenced the CNE, independent samples t -tests were completed with each PD separately. This test was most appropriate due to the way data was coded and because some offenders were diagnosed with multiple PDs. Histrionic PD was not included as none of the participants had this diagnosis. Probable diagnoses of PD were not included in the sample because it was felt this would affect the reliability of the results given there would have been no definitive evidence for the presence of these PDs.

Distressed Revenger. There were no significant results with any PD.

Calm Professional. There was a significant difference between offenders with and without a diagnosis of paranoid PD, $t(11.75) = 3.76$, $p < .01$, with those without paranoid PD scoring higher ($M = 10.5$, $SD = 4.95$) than those with paranoid PD ($M = 15.8$, $SD = 8.12$) on the Calm Professional CNE theme. The magnitude of the differences in the means (mean difference = 7.8, 95% CI: 3.27 – 12.33) was medium (eta squared = .09).

There was a significant difference between offenders with and without a diagnosis of schizotypal PD, $t(19) = 5.67$, $p < .0001$, with those without schizotypal PD scoring higher ($M=16$, $SD=7.89$) than those with schizotypal PD ($M=6$, $SD=0$) on the Calm Professional

CNE theme. The magnitude of the differences in the means (mean difference = 10, 95% CI: 6.31 – 13.69) was large (eta squared = .11).

Depressed Victim. There was a significant difference between offenders with and without borderline PD, $t(14.38) = -2.19$, $p < .05$, with those with borderline PD scoring higher ($M=41$, $SD=15.83$) than those without borderline PD ($M=28.42$, $SD=9.72$) on the Depressed Victim CNE theme. The magnitude of the differences in the means (mean difference = -12.58, 95% CI: -24.86 - -.31) was medium (eta squared = .07).

Elated Hero. There were no significant results with any PD.

Psychopathy

The relationship between psychopathy and CNE themes were investigated using Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient. Preliminary analyses were performed to ensure no violation of the assumptions of normality, linearity and homoscedasticity. The results did not reveal a significant correlation between psychopathy and any of the CNE themes (see table 8 below).

[INSERT TABLE 4]

Discussion

The study examined whether the CNE framework can be applied to offenders with PD and psychopathy. Four distinct themes were identified which related to Ioannou et al.'s (2016) framework; the Calm Professional, Elated Hero, Depressed Victim, and Distressed Revenger. Reliability analysis showed a high degree of association between variables in each theme, and 100% of cases could be classified into one of the themes or as a hybrid between two. The second and third objectives were to examine whether individual PDs related to specific CNE themes and whether there was a relationship between psychopathy and the CNE themes.

Calm Professional

The calm professional felt calm and safe because offending was routine, and they were in control. Although similar to that outlined by Ioannou et al. (2016) there were some differences including a feeling of confidence and thoughtfulness. Additionally, offending was a job and they saw themselves as a professional. This theme reflects Frye's (1957) romance archetype whereby offending is viewed as routine and the offender has control.

Results indicate paranoid and schizoid PD do not relate to this CNE. Those without these PDs view themselves and experience different emotions to the calm professional. Given paranoid and schizoid PD are part of the odd and eccentric cluster (NOMS, 2011), this can be explained by unstable thinking. This is unlike the calm professional who is very controlled.

There was no relationship found between psychopathy and the CNE themes. It is felt this is due to sample size rather than there being no relationship. Given the significance level was close for the calm professional CNE ($p = .15$) with more participants, a relationship might have been found. Research into psychopathy and the identification of traits such as callousness fit with this idea of an individual presenting in a calm manner and conducting themselves like a professional. Hogenboom (2013) found psychopathic offenders did not lack empathy but rather had a switch where they could choose to be empathic or not. This would fit with an individual capable of conducting themselves as a calm professional, but it would be interesting to explore whether this 'empathy switch' affected the CNE.

Elated Hero

The elated hero experienced a range of positive emotions, a feeling that offending was fun, interesting, and like an adventure. They also viewed it as routine and like doing a job, or like being on a mission that provided power and nothing else mattered. For PD and psychopathic offenders, this CNE encompassed a wider range of narrative roles than in Ioannou et al.'s (2016) sample. They saw themselves as a professional and being on a mission. This CNE reflects Frye's (1957) comedy archetype regarding the conquering of

obstacles to obtain positive objectives. Although offending is considered routine and like a job, it also provides a sense of fun and adventure. There were no significant results indicating a link between the elated hero and any PD, or a relationship with psychopathy.

The calm professional and elated hero are positive experiences and there was a hybrid between them. Given these appear in adjacent regions on the SSA plot, they are likely to merge. The differences between them is the elated hero experience is fun and adventure, or a powerful mission whereas the calm professional is goal oriented in terms of being routine and in control. The calm professional is also thoughtful whereas for the elated hero, nothing else mattered.

Depressed Victim

For PD and psychopathic offenders, the depressed victim encompassed negative emotions. They saw themselves as a helpless victim confused about what was happening. Unlike in Ioannou et al.'s (2016) sample, offenders felt scared, upset and worried, but also courageous for acting. They were looking for some sort of recognition. In Ioannou et al.'s (2016) sample, offenders had to, it was their only choice, they didn't care, it was fate, and they knew it was going to happen. This theme reflects Frye's (1957) irony archetype. The offender feels defeated provoking negative emotions and struggle to fully understand their offending.

Results indicate offenders with borderline PD identified with this theme. This is coherent with the conceptualisation of borderline PD in that it is characterised by unstable relationships, self-image, emotions, and impulsivity (NOMS, 2011). Falcus and Johnson (2015) explored the violent narratives of prisoners with co-morbid antisocial and borderline PD focusing on examining the conditions under which they would be violent towards others. Using Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis, four superordinate themes emerged: 'a victim of a hostile and rejecting world', 'unacceptable self', 'unwanted emotions that cannot

be tolerated or controlled' and 'violent revenge as catharsis'. This study partially supports the findings of the current study because some of the themes fit with an individual acting out a depressed victim role (i.e. 'a victim of a hostile and rejecting world' and 'unacceptable self').

These findings are also consistent with Adler, Chin, Kolisetty, and Oltmanns' (2012) research which explored identity disturbance in individuals with borderline PD. They found differences in McAdams' (2001) themes of agency and communion, specifically those with borderline PD displayed lower levels of agency than those without. Research suggests those with borderline PD struggle to present themselves as capable of influencing their circumstances. This is due to a tendency to act on impulse, and inability to consider themselves instigators of experiences as they are influenced by external factors (Adler, et al., 2012; Bradley & Westen, 2005) which is consistent with the depressed victim. However, Bennett and Johnson (2016) found a link between Cluster A PDs (including borderline) and mood disorders. Such mood disorders may contribute to an offender feeling like a depressed victim. This area needs further exploration. Regarding psychopathy, there was no relationship.

Distressed Revenger

The distressed revenger CNE encompassed emotions from unhappy to annoyed and angry. Offenders were either trying to get or acting out revenge because they could not stop themselves. Again, this is similar to Ioannou et al.'s (2016) framework but there are some differences. In their sample, the distressed revenger also encompassed feeling scared, worried and upset, and offending was right, it was a mission, they had power and they were in control. This theme reflects Frye's (1957) tragedy archetype. Because the offender feels wronged in some way they feel negative emotions and gaining revenge would offset this balance.

There were no significant results indicating a link between the distressed revenger and any PD. Given borderline PD is characterised by unstable emotions and impulsivity (NOMS, 2011), this might have been expected to be related. Falcus and Johnson's (2015) study would have supported this given some of the themes identified are consistent with the distressed revenger (i.e. 'unwanted emotions that cannot be tolerated or controlled' and 'violent revenge as catharsis'). Regarding psychopathy, there was no relationship.

The depressed victim and distressed revenger are negative experiences and there was a hybrid between them. They appear in adjacent regions in the SSA plot and are likely to merge. The differences are that the depressed victim is scared and confused whereas the distressed revenger is angry. The depressed victim also sees themselves as helpless but courageous for acting and sought recognition whereas the distressed revenger could not stop themselves.

Although results did not indicate significant results between all PDs and CNE themes, or a relationship with psychopathy, this could reflect the sample size rather than there being no link. Future research should replicate this study on a larger scale. The identification of a specific theme could provide insight into how this population view their crimes and can inform several factors such as treatment by helping offenders to understand their actions. However, this research should consider the effect of participants having co-morbid PD. A large proportion of participants in the current study were diagnosed with multiple PDs and this may have confounded the results. It may be difficult to determine which PD influenced the CNE theme or whether they acted together. Pulay et al. (2010) highlighted the importance of controlling for the impact of confounding PDs and noted that this can caused results to be overstated.

Implications

The identification of the CNE model and its application to this population has theoretical and practical implications. It provides insight into the way PD and psychopathic offenders experience crime. This is unlike previous explanations that focus on an offender's retrospective interpretation of their motivation for offending (Presser, 2009). The CNE provides a theoretical framework that can be applied to this population and highlights the importance of examining the criminal narrative roles acted out and the emotions attributed. This is significant given a deeper understanding of this population is needed.

A clear understanding of the way offenders experience their crimes and understanding the motivation for offending informs several factors including risk management (Mortimer, 2010). Therefore, the CNE can help identify risk factors, gain an understanding of the circumstances surrounding offending, and help the individual develop insight into their own risk and future management. Identification of these risk factors can inform the rehabilitation process in terms of treatment targets and allocation to custody (Davies, Hollin & Bull, 2008).

Practical implications include working with this population generally, and adapting treatment and interview techniques to specific offenders and the CNE they identify with. By understanding how an offender viewed themselves, and the emotions they felt, provides insight into the individual's perception of reality and crime. Additionally, it highlights what roles and emotions were dominant in the offender's understanding of what happened and can be addressed through treatment. In terms of treatment programmes, having knowledge of the CNE of participants can help facilitators target specific offenders relating to their specific treatment needs. Regarding individualising interview techniques, having a general understanding of how offenders viewed themselves would provide an indication of their underlying attitudes and beliefs, as well as emotional state. Therefore, interview techniques can be modified to reflect this. For example, an interview technique for an offender who sees

themselves as a calm professional is likely to be different to an offender who views themselves as a depressed victim.

Limitations and Future Research

Whilst it is acknowledged the sample size was small, the study goes beyond typical analyses and begins to explore the inner workings of this population; the way they viewed themselves and the emotions attributed to that during the commissioning crimes. Given this is such a specific area, the results provide a basis for future research to expand.

Although most participants looked at an offence they remembered well, the fact they were asked to reflect on a past offence has some limitations. This is regarding the fallibility of memory and distortions that occur over time (Howe & Knott, 2015) as a result of conviction perhaps. This could affect the CNE categorisation in terms of whether they viewed it in a positive or negative light. This point is echoed by Ioannou et al. (2015) who suggested future research should explore whether offence outcome influences an offenders' narrative. They suggested offenders may view offences in a more positive light if they were undetected.

The findings of the current study provide support for the existence of Ioannou et al.'s (2016) CNE framework and contributes to its validity. To take this forward and to further validate the framework, research should be conducted exploring whether an offender's CNE is consistent over time and between crimes. This is particularly salient given the above point about the limitations of memory and distortions that occur over time. As well as the proposal that stories change over time (McAdams, 2008). Additionally, research needs to explore whether it can be generalised to other populations such as females, transgender offenders, young offenders, and mentally disordered offenders. Spruin et al. (2014) found that Canter and Youngs' (2012) CNF was applicable to a mentally disordered population and it would be interesting to determine whether emotions can also be mapped onto this. This would provide further insight into their experience of crime and how it is affected by mental disorder.

It would also be interesting to explore early maladaptive schemas which are core beliefs about the self, others, and the world (Young, 1999; Young, Klosko, & Weishaar, 2003). It has been suggested these schemas drive behaviours associated with PD and contribute to offending behaviour (Carr & Francis, 2010). Research suggests schemas predict PDs; albeit some more strongly than others (Carr & Francis, 2010). Young (1999) identified five broad categories of schemas including ‘disconnection and rejection’. This involves schemas regarding security and acceptance and these needs not being fulfilled. This cluster may relate to the depressed victim CNE. Schemas may therefore be a confounding variable and a schema questionnaire could be administered alongside the narrative roles and emotions questionnaires to control for this. Finally, the discussion of screening tools to identify PD and related issues in a forensic setting is one area worth further discussion (Dietzel, Synnott & Ioannou, 2017).

Conclusion

The present study made progress in validating Ioannou et al’s (2016) CNE framework through its application to a psychopathic and PD population. Resulting themes were consistent though there were some differences in the representation of each theme. Nevertheless, the results have theoretical and practical implications regarding our understanding of how these offenders experience their crimes, and how professional services can engage with them. This relates to risk management through identifying risk factors which can inform treatment targets, and adapting treatment and interview techniques to suit specific offenders. Although results did not identify a significant relationship between psychopathy and any specific CNE theme, or links between all individual PDs and specific themes, a replication of this study on a larger scale may be beneficial. This would provide further insight into which CNE themes are dominant with offenders diagnosed with psychopathy or a particular PD.

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Table 1. Number of participants with a definite diagnosis of each PD.

Personality Disorder (PD)	N	Personality Disorder (PD)	N
Antisocial	15	Schizotypal	1
Borderline	10	Narcissistic	1
Avoidant	6	Dependent	1
Paranoid	1	Obsessive-Compulsive	1
Schizoid	1	Histrionic	0

Table 2. Scales of Criminal Narrative Experience Themes.

CNE Theme	Number of items	Cronbach's α
Elated Hero	32	0.96
Calm Professional	6	0.89
Distressed Revenger	8	0.79
Depressed Victim	16	0.88

Table 3. Number of cases assigned to each criminal narrative experience theme.

Theme	N	%
Distressed Revenger	13	59.09
Calm Professional	5	22.73
Depressed Victim	1	4.55
Elated Hero	1	4.55
Depressed Victim – Distressed Revenger	1	4.55
Elated Hero – Calm Professional	1	4.55

Table 4. Correlations for psychopathy scores with the CNE themes (N = 18).

Variables	Psychopathy	p (two-tailed)
Psychopathy	1	
Distressed Revenger	-0.01	0.97
Calm Professional	0.36	0.15
Depressed Victim	-0.31	0.22
Elated Hero	-0.07	0.8

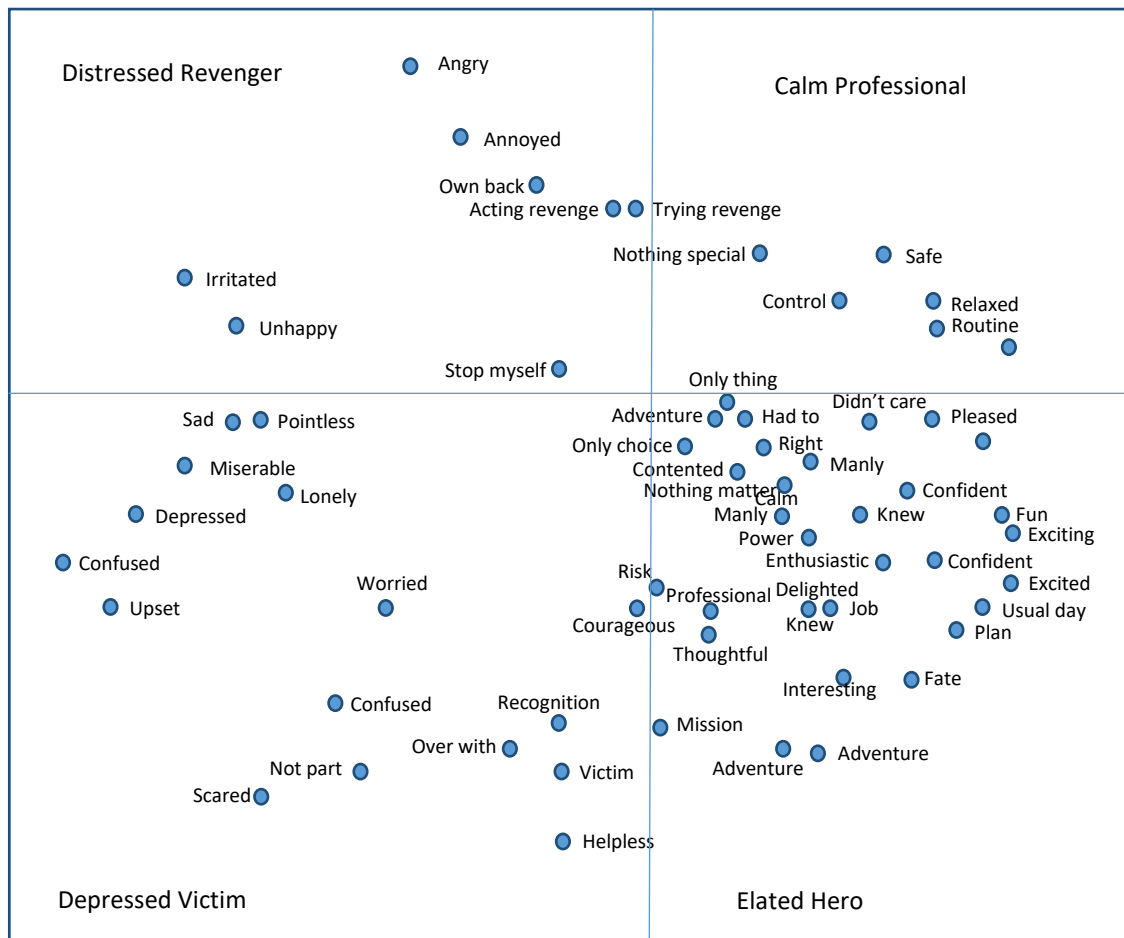


Figure 1. One by two projection of the two-dimensional smallest space analysis of emotions and narrative roles with regional interpretation of CNE themes.

Note. Coefficient of Alienation = 0.2119.